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ABSTRACT

This paper documents work undertaken by a bicultural research group at the New Zealand Special Education Service, Poutama Pounamu Education Research Centre. The research group develops and evaluates learning resources for parents and teachers of Maori students. Two projects are described. Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi (Pause Prompt Praise) assists parent and peer tutoring of reading in the Maori language. Trials of the tutoring procedures using student tutor-tutee pairs in Maori-immersion and bilingual classrooms found that both tutees and tutors improved their reading level and comprehension in both Maori and English. Training of trainers, who then instruct adult tutors, adheres closely to Maori philosophy and cultural protocols. Hei Awhina Matua is a cooperative parent and teacher program for assisting students who have behavior and learning difficulties. Both programs build on strengths of parents, teachers, and community, enabling shared responsibility for students' behavior and learning. The research process is presented as a bicultural journey toward the revitalization of Maori language and culture in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This journey highlights the importance of researchers' cultural knowledge and understanding, in both developing and evaluating resource materials. The overall research strategy employed is that of participant-driven empowering research. Four important elements are participation of elders, contexts that are culturally appropriate and safe for Maori, the research team functioning as a metaphoric extended family, and extensive networking to achieve research objectives. (Contains 24 references.) (Author/SV)

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A Bicultural Research Journey: The Poutama Pounamu Education Research Centre

Tauranga, New Zealand

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A BICULTURAL RESEARCH JOURNEY: THE POUTAMA POUNAMU EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTRE

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ABSTRACT

This paper documents work undertaken by a bicultural research group at the New Zealand Special Education Service Poutama Pounamu Education Research Centre. The research group develops and trials learning resources for parents and teachers of Maori students. Two sets of learning resources are presented. The first of these, *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi,* is a programme to assist parent and peer tutoring of reading in the Maori language. The second, *Hei Awhina Matua*, is a cooperative parent and teacher programme for assisting students who have behaviour and learning difficulties. Both programmes build on the strengths available within parents, teachers and community. The programmes assist which enable them to share responsibility for students' behaviour and learning.

The research process is presented as a bicultural journey, towards the revitalisation of the Maori language and culture in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This journey highlights the importance of the researchers' cultural knowledge and understanding both in developing the resource materials and in initiating research to evaluate them. The overall research strategy employed throughout is that of participant-driven empowering research (Bishop & Glynn, 1993; Bishop, 1996).

1. Introduction

A lack of cultural consciousness among educational researchers in Aotearoa/New Zealand has contributed to the belittlement of Maori perspectives on knowledge and principles of learning and teaching (Glynn and Bishop, 1995). Mainstream educators, and the wider New Zealand community have been slow to recognise the importance of language and culture in the successful achievement of indigenous students. Educational research and development in New Zealand has traditionally struggled to improve the achievement of Maori students in mainstream schools through assimilationist and integrationist perspectives. For the majority of Maori students over several generations, participation and achievement in education has come at the cost of their own language and culture. Colonising practices within the New Zealand Education system have also meant that many contemporary Maori parents are no longer strong in their own language and culture and are unable to pass these on to their own children.

In recent years, Maori people have strongly challenged and resisted the position that education for their children should come at the cost of language and culture. Maori people have implemented major initiatives to improve the achievement of Maori students. Pre-school Kohanga Reo (language nests) have been established to restore the language and culture to young children and their parents. Kura Kaupapa Maori primary schools, which teach all aspects of the New Zealand national curriculum via the medium of Maori language have been introduced. Wananga Maori, or tertiary eduction institutions now offer State recognised degree and diploma programmes in Maori language. They also offer programmes in Maori Education, Maori Health and Business and Teacher Education.

Another important Maori education initiative has come from within the New Zealand Special Education Service. This initiative is the development of a tangata whenua (indigenous people) policy which commits the Service to meeting the special education needs of Maori students. The policy facilitates this by promoting the employment and training of Maori staff, and through consulting with Maori elders via a national council (Kaumatua Runanga Nui). The tangata whenua policy also facilitates the developing and trialing by Maori staff of focussed teaching and learning programmes. The Special Education Service has recently funded an education research and development centre, Poutama Pounamu, specifically to produce learning and teaching resources and teacher development programmes.

This paper presents an approach to research undertaken by members of the Poutama Pounamu staff. The staff work together as a research whanau. Members are committed to sharing a

Kaupapa Maori (indigenous philosophy) which focuses on developing, trialing and disseminating resources and programmes. The overall research strategy employed throughout is that of participant-driven empowering research (Bishop & Glynn, 1993; Bishop, 1996). The Kaupapa Maori approach involves networking with Maori staff from the Special Education Service, together with elders, teachers, whanau (family) members, children and a Tauiwi (non indigenous) researcher.

The paper also documents the development and trialing of two curriculum resources for Maori parents and teachers. The first of these, *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* is a programme to assist parent and peer tutoring of reading skills in Te Reo Maori (Maori language). The second resource, *Hei Awhina Matua* is a cooperative parent and teacher programme to assist students who have behaviour and learning difficulties. These programmes capitalise on the strengths available within parents and teachers, which enable them to share responsibility for students' behaviour and learning.

Our research work has involved all of us in a bicultural journey, towards the restoration of the Maori language and culture in Aotearoa New Zealand. This journey highlights the importance of culturally competent behaviour by researchers both in developing the resource materials and in initiating research to evaluate them.

2. Tatari, Tautoko, Tauawhi

Pause Prompt Praise is a set of reading tutoring strategies developed in South Auckland. *Pause Prompt Praise* is designed for use in a one–to–one oral reading context so that low–progress readers can receive more opportunities to self–correct errors and to practise problem–solving strategies (Glynn, 1995).. Assisting readers to learn these strategies requires tutors to:
pause before responding to children's errors
prompt children to utilise both contextual and letter – sound information (rather than telling them the correct word)
praise children's use of independent strategies such as self–correction and prompted correction.

The *Pause Prompt Praise* tutoring strategies cue the readers to use all available information to solve unknown words. Such information includes background knowledge of the story topic, familiarity with the language structure of the text, the meaning contained within the context of each sentence or paragraph, and the letter–sound information within words. Tutors are trained to give priority to the reader's understanding of the meaning of words, before attempting to focus on

letter and sound information. Tutors tell the reader the correct word only as a last resort. Tutors are not required to respond to every error a reader makes. Given the priority on helping readers understand the meaning of words, tutors may ignore minor errors which do not greatly alter the meaning of the text.

The Poutama Pounamu research whanau have produced a Maori version of *Pause Prompt Praise*, entitled *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi. Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* was designed to assist children who are learning to read in Maori. *Tatari, Tautoko Tauawhi* was trialed in two schools within a tuakana – teina (peer tutoring) context. Glynn et al (1993) reported from the trial in the first school, Maungatapu primary, that tuakana (tutors) were quite successful in using the procedures in Maori. Following training with *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* they responded to four times more teina (tutee) errors, doubled their rate of pausing and doubled their use of "read on" and "read again" prompts. They also doubled their use of praise for prompted corrections. Although this initial study was brief, data indicated a lower error rate and a slightly higher correct rate for teina (tutee) children, in contrast with non–tutored children. The tuakana children also benefited from decreased error rates, consistent with gains reported for peer tutors using Pause Prompt Praise (Medcalf, 1989; Medcalf & Glynn, 1987; Houghton & Glynn, 1993).

The second trial of *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* involved 26 tuakana-teina (tutor-tutee) pairs and eight control students in Maori medium and mainstream classes at a large Intermediate School. They were assisted by a research team comprising their three teachers, their kuia, a Special Eduction Service Maori staff member and a tauiwi university researcher. 56 of the 60 students were of Maori descent and their mean age was 12 years 5 months. They had between zero and five years experience in Maori medium education.

Tuakana were trained to tutor their teina with the *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* procedures. Pre and Post measures were taken of tuakana implementation of the procedures, and of teina and tuakana reading of both Maori and English texts. These measures included text level, correct and incorrect reading rates, and comprehension in both Maori and English. Qualitative comments about the programme were also gathered from students and teachers.

Results from this study (Glynn, Berryman et al, 1996) indicated that tuakana readily increased their rates of tatari (pause) and tauawhi (praise) as well as haere tonu (read-on) and ata titiro (letter-sound) prompts, but utilised very few kia marama ai (meaning) prompts. Results also indicated clear gains for both teina and tuakana in terms of reading level, reading rate, and

comprehension on both Maori and English texts. Both students and teachers expressed satisfaction and positive views about their participation in the programme.

As was the case in the first trial in the Maori immersion classes at Maungatapu primary school, tuakana in the bilingual and mainstream classes at Mount Maunganui Intermediate readily learned to implement the *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* tutoring procedures. The data are consistent with those reported in studies in which tutors learned to use the English *Pause Prompt Praise* procedures, (Glynn & McNaughton, 1985; Wheldall & Mettem, 1985; Houghton and Glynn, 1993).

Teina students gained between 1.5 and 2.0 years in reading level, increased their correct reading rate by 15 words per minute and lowered their incorrect rate by almost two words per minute. Teina also increased their comprehension scores by between 20 and 46 per cent. Furthermore, the percentage of teina errors corrected increased from 35 to 75.

In contrast, control students over the same ten weeks gained between 0.6 and 0.8 years in reading level, increased their correct rate by 9 words per minute, but slightly increased their incorrect rate by 0.6 words per minute. Their comprehension scores (other than direct recall scores) ranged from a decrease of 9 per cent to a gain of 26 per cent.

Consistent with findings from other research, tuakana derived considerable benefit from participating in the tutoring role. Although scoring generally higher than both teina and control students at pre-test, tuakana gained between 0.5 and 1.3 years in reading level, increased their correct reading rate by 7 words per minute and lowered their incorrect rate by 0.8 words per minute. They also increased their comprehension scores by between 19 and 41 per cent.

Time spent by tuakana in assisting other students with their reading was not simply time out from their own learning to read. Rather, their own reading skills benefited from the time they spent previewing reading texts with teina, carefully listening to teina reading, matching that oral reading against the text being read, as well as monitoring and classifying teina errors in order to provide appropriate prompts. This experience may have altered the way in which tuakana understood the reading process in that a greater emphasis was given to helping teina understand what they were reading. This in turn is likely to have aided tuakana comprehension processes.

Teina and tuakana gains in reading level, in rate of correct reading, and decreases in rate of incorrect reading, reported in this study are highly similar to those reported in the first trial of

Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi at Maungatapu school (Glynn, Atvars, Furlong, Davies, Rogers & Teddy, 1993). However, as well as confirming those findings with a larger sample of tuakana-teina pairs, the present study also demonstrates marked gains on measures of comprehension. Clearly, students' reading of more difficult texts at a faster rate did not result in any breakdown in understanding of what they were reading.

In this study all students read Maori language texts exclusively and the *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* procedures were implemented predominantly in Maori. Yet gains were made by both teina and tuakana on measures of reading in English. Teina gained 1.0 year in English reading level and 20 per cent in English comprehension. Tuakana gained 0.5 years in reading level and 25 per cent in comprehension. These students from Maori medium and mainstream classes suffered no losses in terms of their level of skill in reading and understanding English. On the contrary, they showed marked gains over control students in terms of their comprehension of English texts.

Teacher and student comments suggest that *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* is a user friendly programme which is well liked by both tuakana and teina. Some teacher and student comments suggest that there may have been a flow-on effect into oral language skills especially for those students who were beginning speakers of Maori as a second language. This is a worthwhile issue for further research, particularly where Maori parents may want to help their own children learn to read in Maori, but feel that their Maori language skills are not strong enough.

Although this study was focussed on Maori reading skills, important cultural learning also took place. Students learned to understand and value the tuakana-teina relationship, and its two way responsibilities. Students learned about this relationship as well as from it. This is in line with the observational study of kohanga reo reported by Hohepa, Smith, Smith and McNaughton (1992) which noted the inseparable linkages between language learning and cultural learning. This is a key argument in support of increased educational input from indigenous peoples if their languages and cultures are to survive within mainstream education.

Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi appears to be an effective initiative for assisting students learning to read in Maori in mainstream as well as Maori immersion settings, even where not all teachers are fluent speakers of Maori. Although derived from empirical research within a positivist research paradigm, *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* clearly does not serve an assimilationist agenda. Rather, it is capable of making a modest contribution to the survival and maintenance of te reo Maori.

During 1994 and 1995 the Special Education Service and the Ministry of Education have recognised this contribution by funding a series of ten *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* hui. These hui have enabled a Special Education Service National Training Team to deliver training workshops to ten districts and to accredit 18 Special Education Service Maori staff as *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* trainers.

These training hui have adhered closely to Kaupapa Maori principles. Kaumatua and kuia from each Special Education Service District and from the National Training Team have been active participants in each workshop. They ensured that appropriate kawa (protocol) was followed. They initiated powhiri (formal rituals of encounter), karakia (prayer), waiata (song), mihimihi, (greetings), and whakawhanaungatanga (forming relationships and networking). Their participation ensured that mana whenua (rights pertaining to the people who belong to the land) and tikanga a rohe (customs of a particular tribe or region) were upheld and respected. Adherence to these principles has ensured that ownership and control over the development and delivery of the *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* programme has remained with Maori.

While *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* procedures have proved to be highly effective for Maori students learning to read in Maori medium classrooms ,the great majority of Maori students are in mainstream classes, and many of them require additional support when learning to read in English. The Poutama Pounamu research whanau were concerned to find ways of assisting these students. Hence, it was decided to train a group of volunteer adults in the use of the Pause Prompt Praise reading tutoring strategies, and to have these adults tutor low progress Maori readers. The majority of these adults were members of the Maori Women's Welfare League, and many of them were grandparents. Adult Maori tutors were matched with individual Maori students. The cultural match between tutor and reader was a significant factor in the marked reading gains made by these readers. Being able to relate to their readers from within a cultural perspective enabled the tutors to establish family connections as well as assist with reading tutoring. This ensured that the readers were working from within a supportive and empowering context. The positive reading gains made by all the students who remained in this study were reported to the Ministry of Education (Atvars, Berryman & Glynn, 1995).

3. Hei Awhina Matua

Parents are being increasingly frustrated when they are held responsible for the behaviour and learning of their students at school when they have neither the authority nor the strategies to intervene at school (Glynn, Fairweather & Donald, 1992).

Over the past twenty years, a number of different approaches have been introduced into the New Zealand education system to improve the quality of services for students with behavioural and learning difficulties. These have included Guidance and Learning Units, (modelled after the original Mangere Guidance Unit), short-term residential programs with concurrent parent training (eg. The Glenburn Residence and School), Support Teams for students with special needs, and overseas programmes and initiatives such as whole-school behaviour management programmes (eg. Assertive Discipline).

These approaches have met with varying degrees of success in dealing with students' behavioural and learning difficulties at school. The Mangere Guidance Unit was able to provide on-site in-service support with instructional programmes and behaviour management strategies for teachers in the three Intermediate schools it served (Thomas & Glynn, 1976; Thomas, Pohl, Presland & Glynn, 1977; Thomas, Presland, Grant & Glynn. 1978; Glynn, Thomas & Wotherspoon, 1978).

The Glenburn residential and school programmes were able to combine three essential elements. These were within-school instructional and behavioural programmes, residential behaviour management combined with social skills training and training for parents in the skills needed to support the school and residential programmes when their children returned home each weekend (Glynn, 1983; Glynn, Seymour, Robertson & Bullen, 1983; Glynn & Vaigro, 1984; Glynn, Clark, Vaigro & Lawless, 1984).

The more recent Support Teams approach also provided on-site in-service support for teachers who have students with special needs in their classes. The Support team combines the services of an experienced teacher employed within a school who is released part-time to work strategically with other key staff within the school together. The support team works with the services of outside itinerant professionals, for example educational psychologists. The Support Team works to provide indirect assistance for students with special needs by modifying curriculum delivery and allocating existing school resources to support individual teachers in meeting student needs within their regular classrooms. Where the Support Team model is clearly understood, it can contribute to gradual school-wide changes in the way a school responds to and accepts responsibility for its students who have learning and behavioural difficulties (Glynn, Moore, Gold & Sheldon 1992; Moore, Glynn & Gold 1993).

Despite the successes reported from these different approaches, it is clear that the extent of parent involvement, apart from in the Glenburn programmes, was extremely limited. Parental

involvement might take the form of attending and participating in meetings called by school staff or other professionals to receive information about intervention strategies planned for their children. There was typically limited opportunity for parent or community consultation about the design of intervention strategies which would incorporate parent and community values and priorities.

However, all approaches lacked a clear bicultural perspective. They did not address the principle of tino rangatiratanga (self determination) in terms of allowing the Maori community a share in planning and decision-making. Nor did they address concerns of Maori communities about how the behavioural and learning needs of Maori children should be met. This is a critical flaw in past and recent approaches which is addressed in the present study.

A critical concern raised in the reports of all the above approaches is staff training. All models outlined have built-in needs for focussed and hands-on training of key personnel in a wide range of professional skills. These include skills in behavioural assessment and intervention, design of individual instructional programmes that are consistent with current curriculum developments, and consulting and collaborative skills to ensure effective working relationships with parents and other professionals.

There have been continuing calls for a partnership between parents and teachers who share responsibility for the same students. However parent involvement with teachers at the level of improving the behaviour and learning of their own children falls well short of an effective partnership.

Parent involvement in their children's education more typically embodies parents participating either in fund-raising, clerical assistance and other teacher-support activities or, alternatively, participating as elected representatives on school Boards of Trustees. Although these forms of participation are important and worthwhile, they do not provide an effective means of sharing information about behaviour and learning of individual students' across home and school settings. They do not provide the means for parents and teachers to cooperate and collaborate and to reinforce and build on learning which occurs in both home and school settings. Consequently, students' learning and behavioural difficulties in one setting (home or school) are too easily attributed to the perceived inadequacies of the other. This is especially problematic when teachers belong to a different ethnic group from their students (Glynn & Bishop, 1995).

Teachers too readily blame students' failure to learn at school on perceived inadequacies in students' home backgrounds, their cultural differences, their ethnicity and their parents' lack of motivation or commitment to help them achieve. Parents too readily blame their children's low achievement and behavioural difficulties on teachers' ignorance of students' cultural and ethnic origins, and on their growing increasingly out of touch with the financial and emotional stresses and strains of contemporary parenting.

What is needed is an approach which can promote cooperation and collaboration between parents and teachers through sharing detailed information as well as human resources and skills. An approach is needed which will capitalise on the strengths available within parents and teachers, and enable them to take joint responsibility for students' behaviour and learning. Such an approach will need to elicit the support and approval of the wider school community. It will also need to elicit the expertise and experience of professionals trained in delivering behavioural and learning programs for individual students as well as in working collaboratively with adults, parents, teachers and community members.

Hei Awhina Matua is a whanau-based project. It proposes an effective parent and teacher partnership to overcome behavioural and learning difficulties experienced by Maori students at home and at school.By doing so the project also seeks to address the principle of tino rangatiratanga in terms of making manifest research issues of initiation and benefits (Bishop, 1996). The project involves kaumatua and kuia, parents, whanau and teachers from four schools in Tauranga Moana, all of whom have a strong commitment to Maori medium education.

At this time, the research whanau has completed three phases of the research porject. First, parents, students and teachers recorded and prioritised behavioural and learning difficulties and the home and school contexts and settings in which they occur. Second, video and written training resources were developed and trialed in one school (Mt Maunganui Intermediate). While our research whanau had planned extensive consultation with students, we were surprised and delighted when the students themselves sought and provided input into the project at various stages. The impact of student input on the research team led to the whanau modifying its design and methodology in response to student input, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the project.

Students contributed to writing behavioural checklists and assisted in prioritising behaviours and settings of greatest concern. They wrote and acted in 11 scenarios which portrayed those behaviours and the home, school and community settings in which they occurred. They assisted in producing and directing the scenarios which present parents and teachers with constructive ways

of responding to student behaviour. Some students joined with the research team to present a progress report to the bicultural Ministry of Education advisory committee, and travelled to Dunedin to help edit the draft video. They supplied written comments following the presentation of the video back to parents and community members, and suggested ways of introducing the project to other schools. Students were part of the whanau which presented this paper at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference at Albuquerque. Two of these students have been invited to speak in a panel discussion on children's involvement in research at a national conference at the Children's Issues Centre (Dunedin).

Third, at the present time, the resources and the accompanying training program are being trialed in two further primary schools (Otepou and Maungatapu). Evaluation data include structured interviews, diaries, direct observations, and discussions and decisions arising from hui arranged to develop and implement the *Hei Awhina Matua* programme.

4. The Bicultural Research Journey

Each member of our research whanau is committed to the revitalisation of the Maori language and culture in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. Each of us has been driven to find culturally appropriate and safe ways of improving the educational achievement of Maori students. Each of us has been engaged in a personal bicultural journey through our involvement in the *Tatari Tautoko Tauawhi* and the *Hei Awhina Matua* research programmes. Our research whanau extends across many tribal regions, and across four generations. Our individual journeys have led us to bring a wide range of experience and skills to the newly established Special Education Service Poutama Pounamu Education Research Centre.

Our journey began at Poho-o Rawiri marae (Maori meeting place) at Turanga Nui. in 1991. Our journey continued at Hairini marae and Maungatapu school in Tauranga Moana, and ventured to the World Indigenous Peoples' conference at Wollongong On returning our work resumed in Tauranga Moana at Mount Maunganui Intermediate School and at the same time reached out to ten of the Special Education Service districts between Tai Tokerau and Nelson-Marlborough. The *Hei Awhina Matua* project has taken us to Waikari marae and to Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Otepou (Otepou Maori Language Immersion school). Our journey continues with this presentation at the World Indigenous Peoples' conference in Albuquerque in 1996.

In reflecting upon our collective experiences along the way, we recall the many important interactions and events which have taught us much. As we look back, we can now recognise

several significant cultural issues which have been guiding us and which will continue to lead us into the future. These issues are:

Participation of kaumatua and kuia Our elders have been active participants throughout this research journey. They have given us their authority, blessing and spiritual guidance. They have assisted us through their extensive community networks. and through their continued attendance and support at all important occasions, including national and international presentations of our work. They have provided us with excellent role models of tiaki (caring and guidance) manaaki (support and hospitality), and aroha ki te tangata (service to mankind). They have also been a continual source of energy which has helped us all to continue, especially in the face of difficulties. In return it is vital that researchers take responsibility for kaumatua, including travel, accommodation and other expenses when costing research proposals.

Kaupapa Maori All of our research and training activities have been carried out in contexts which have been culturally appropriate and safe for Maori. This has been achieved through our being invited onto several marae and kura kaupapa where the research projects have been supported and facilitated. Decision making and planning have received kaumatua approval, and our major meetings, workshops and presentations have been conducted according to Maori protocol. In this way, the research and development work in these two projects has remained in the hands of Maori, and has not been taken over by non-Maori interests. Kaupapa Maori principles have also provided a safe space in which a non-Maori researcher who understands Maori language and respects these cultural principles can work effectively and journey alongside Maori.

Working as a whanau We function as a metaphoric whanau, despite living in different parts of the country, and despite one of us being non-Maori. We have tried to follow appropriate kawa (protocol) in our formal meetings, and in our interactions with Maori and non-Maori visitors. Each of us endeavours to support the wellbeing of the others as well as to work towards attaining the work goals we set. Our major decisions are reached through negotiation and consensus. We acknowledge each other's individual experience, expertise and professional networks in finding the best way to reach our goals and objectives. Our whanau is strengthened through a relationship built on mutual trust and respect. Each of us is aware that our membership within the whanau carries with it both rights and responsibilities towards each other and towards the whanau as a whole.

Whakawhanaungatanga as a research process From a Maori perspective, establishing whakapapa links (genealogical or family relationships), or "connecting" oneself with new people one meets is a pervasive and important cultural practice. Maori people will spend considerable time in searching for common tribal relationships and family connections before getting down to business or discussing any set agenda. Knowing who people are and where they have come from is more important than knowing what specific experiences and skills they have. There is a great deal of security and comfort in knowing that we have found a whakapapa link with people we need to work with.

As our research projects have progressed, we have become aware of how we have expanded our networks, and formed working relationships with more and more people in order to achieve our research objectives. This process of networking has contributed greatly to advancing our research as it has brought more and more people "on board" the canoe, strengthening and empowering the whanau, and in turn strengthening and empowering the community. Indeed, for our research whanau, researching ways to improve the educational achievement of Maori students and continually renewing and strengthening whanau networks have become inextricably linked.

The journey goes on We have now come to realise that we may have started on a never-ending journey. Although we are firmly committed to our destination, improved educational achievement for Maori children, we cannot know the many pathways we may have to take, nor the wrong turnings and detours we may be led into. However, we all appreciate that we have a responsibility to complete the journey we have begun, and, when the going gets difficult, to find others who will join us. It is appropriate to finish with a saying from the Tuhoe people of Aotearoa:

Ki te timata koe i tetahi mahi, mahia kia tutuki.

(If you start out on any undertaking, carry it through to completion).

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